

**Media Release**

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## SBS National Languages Competition Winners Awarded

Nearly 20,000 students nationwide, aged 4 to 18 years, entered the inaugural SBS National Languages Competition which aims to encourage and celebrate a love of learning languages in Australia. SBS and Community Languages Australia (CLA) awarded the six national winners across three age categories at the SBS National Languages Competition Awards Ceremony on Saturday 8 October.

Centred around the theme ‘what does learning another language mean to you?’, SBS’s inaugural languages competition hopes to inspire young Australians to explore and embrace what it is to be an Australian in all our diversity and contribute to the retention and continuing development of language learning.

Awarded at The University of Sydney at the weekend, the SBS winner in the junior category, **Natalie Chung** (6, Acacia Ridge QLD) illustrated what learning Cantonese means to her and the People’s Choice winner **Vaiga Karthik** (4, Narre Warren South VIC) illustrated what learning Tamil means to her. In the secondary primary category, SBS winner **Kathir Janaki Sakthivel** (11, Cranbourne Victoria) responded in Tamil and People’s Choice winner **Anahid Andisheh Far** (10, Bonner ACT) responded in Persian. In the senior category, SBS winner **Katerina Buck** (18, Beckenham WA) responded in Russian while the People’s Choice winner **Raaid Ahmed Mollah** (14, Wyndham Vale VIC) responded in Bangla.

SBS Director of Audio and Language Content Mandi Wicks said: “We’re thrilled with the huge response we have received from across the country to the inaugural SBS National Languages Competition. It’s been wonderful to see the range of beautiful illustrations and written submissions which indicate how important language is to many young Australians today. Australia is one of the most multicultural and multilingual nations, and we believe the SBS National Languages Competition delivers on SBS’s purpose to inspire Australians to explore and celebrate diversity.”

72 national finalists from across the country were announced on 30 August. One winner from each of the three categories was selected by an SBS judging panel including Director of Audio and Language Content, **Mandi Wicks**, SBS Arabic24 presenter **Heba Kassoua** and TV screenwriter, columnist and author **Benjamin Law**.

In addition, Community Languages Australia selected 24 entries from the 72 national finalists, who were eligible for the People’s Choice Competition. One winner per category was voted by the public between 30 August and 9 September.

The winners, as selected by the SBS judging panel and the public vote, accepted their award and prize at the ceremony. The event was attended by the NSW Minister for Disability Services, Ageing and Multiculturalism the Hon. John Ajaka MLC and the Shadow Minister for Education Jihad Dib.

To view finalist entries, visit [sbs.com.au/nlc](http://sbs.com.au/nlc)

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