

PRESS RELEASE



The 2021 National German Olympics Maximizes Digital Platforms for Young Learners to Compete



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The biggest annual German language contest in Indonesia, the National German Olympics, was successfully held virtually for the first time this year due to the pandemic. With the help of various online platforms, a total of 665 young German language learners from 345 high schools, vocational schools and Madrasah Aliyah in 28 Indonesian provinces competed against each other in the 2021 National German Olympics held in January.

Every year since 2010, Goethe-Institut Indonesien has organized and hosted the National German Olympics in collaboration with the Indonesian Association of German Language Teachers (IGBJI) and supported by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Indonesia. This competition is held annually to promote the German language in Indonesia and to encourage high schoolers to showcase their German language abilities.

“The German Olympics is usually a great opportunity to meet in person, connect with each other and, of course, to talk German to each other. But this year, with the worldwide pandemic, everything is different. We have to keep a distance. The question arose whether we should just cancel the National German Olympics this year altogether. But after many discussions with teachers, students and members of the education authorities, the consensus was this: We still want to make it happen,” said Dr. Stefan Dreyer, Goethe-Institut Indonesien Director, during his talk in the virtual awards ceremony on 30 January 2021.

This year, the 665 students aged 15 to 17 began their journey by competing in the preliminary round held on 7 January. Utilizing digital platforms such as Zoom and Moodle, the students were tested in their writing, listening and reading skills on language proficiency level A2 (advanced beginner level). The participant field then narrowed to 70 finalists who later competed in the final round on 28 January.

During the final round, the 70 finalists had to demonstrate their German language abilities via smartphones using the app Actionbound. The platform tested their writing, listening and speaking skills. For the speaking test, they were given 20 minutes to prepare and record a 90-second talk on an assigned topic that was then uploaded to the app.

The winners of this year’s competition were announced in the virtual award ceremony, live-streamed via [Goethe-Institut Indonesien’s YouTube channel](#) on 30 January. The winners are: Frederick Owen Tesalonika (SMA Kristen 1 Penabur Jakarta) as the champion, Delon Arjuna (SMA Negeri 4 Medan) as the runner-up, Nathanael Farrel Monika (SMA Kristen 1 Penabur Jakarta) in third place and Nicholas Ciputra (SMA

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Ignatius Global School Palembang) in fourth place. Each winner received a scholarship for a German language course from Goethe-Institut worth about Rp 17 million.

This digital edition of the National German Olympics had to overcome certain obstacles. Blackouts and technical issues occurred during the preliminary round at a few locations. The president of IGBJI, Ekadewi Indrawidjaja, stated: "This year's National German Olympics is challenging because everything has to take place digitally. However, the teachers and students refused to be defeated by these challenges. Thankfully, everyone was able to participate."

Dr. Matthias Müller, Head of Culture and Information of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to Indonesia, added: "The National German Olympics is a competition, but it's not a tough fight against each other, as everybody is striving to achieve the same: learning a foreign language. By learning foreign languages, we want to achieve a deeper understanding of cultures, of countries, of people. Taking the opportunity to participate in this year's Olympics is an important step in this direction".

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The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany's cultural institute, active worldwide. We promote the study of German abroad and encourage international cultural exchange. We also provide a comprehensive image of Germany through information on German political, social and cultural life. Our various cultural and educational programs support intercultural dialogue and enable cultural participation. These various programs strengthen the structures of civil society and support global mobility.

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