

INTERCULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2023





Category

SUSTAINABILITY

COUNTRY

North Macedonia

ORGANISATION

Friends of Education

PROJECT

School Plastic free
Movement

The project “School Plastic free Movement” by the NGO “Friends of Education” is operating in the primary school “Zhivko Brajkovski” in Skopje. It intends to raise awareness for recycling plastic through the building of new musical instruments and to support intercultural communication with music lessons.

Under the slogan, “Collect, Sort, Renew, Reuse,” students and teachers transform everyday items like plastic bottles and packaging into instruments, advancing a deeper understanding of sound and instrument mechanics. With 83 students participating, including those from diverse

ethnic and linguistic backgrounds and different grade levels, this project promotes collaboration and cultural education.

The project “School Plastic free Movement” receives the Sustainability Award for its creative approach to a more sustainable future and for enabling students to build friendships and achieve common goals by bridging language barriers and strengthening intercultural understanding.



INTERCULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

INTRODUCTION

With the Intercultural Achievement Award (IAA) the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs highlights innovative projects for intercultural dialogue in Austria and around the world. These initiatives broaden our perspectives, encourage mutual understanding and promote peaceful intercultural exchange.

I am very proud that this year, on the **10th Anniversary of the IAA**, we received a record number of 364 submissions. All of these 364 projects truly make a difference: from initiating exceptional civil society activities, to breaking ground in intercultural dialogue, to overcoming socio-cultural challenges through intercultural action.

At a time when our way of life is under threat, arts and culture play a vital role in defending our liberal, open and democratic societies based on freedom of expression and individual dignity.

In these turbulent times, we yearn for familiar reference points and new sources of hope. That is exactly what arts, culture and the creative community can provide. In an age of uncertainty, the arts are our unifying constant. They foster compassion, encourage us to see the world through the eyes of others, and enable us to not only imagine the world as it is, but how it could be.

I am convinced that arts and culture – as a deeply ingrained and indispensable part of Austria's foreign policy – will only become more important as spaces for international exchange and open dialogue in the coming years. In an increasingly challenging geopolitical environment, they will be our soft power and our key to opening doors worldwide.

Our heartfelt congratulations and gratitude go to the IAA laureates of 2023 and all those actively involved in dialogue projects. Their efforts and dedication contribute to a more inclusive and peaceful world.

Alexander Schallenberg

*Federal Minister for European and
International Affairs*