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The Sápmi Awards

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The Sápmi Awards is a competition that aims to highlight Sámi culture and traditions that enrich Sápmi. The importance and the unique values in Sámi culture and knowledge in their field are highlighted by the contestants within each category. Members of the public, together with the expert jury, choose the winners. By rewarding skilful Sámi representatives, we create strong role models and attractive ambassadors for Sámi culture. Competition categories vary from year to year, and are decided by the organisers, in consultation with the concept's owner.

The Sápmi Awards was arranged for the first time in 2012. It has since been held twice, in 2013 and 2014. Preparations begin six months before the event, even though the festival for the awards only takes two to three days.

The weekend is filled with seminars, festive activities, and finals, and in the evenings, Sámi artists enter the stage, while tasty food experiences are served. Approximately 1,000 people visit and take part in the evening events. Daytime events are free, so unlike the evening events, when tickets are sold, there is no exact figure regarding how many people visit these. Sámi language is, and should be, a natural part of the arrangements.

In fact, the Sámi language is not one single language – there are several varieties. Language is important both for Sámi identity and for Sámi culture overall. Unfortunately, the use of this language has decreased during the last century. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), all Sámi languages are classified as threatened. On the Swedish side of Sápmi the situation is critical for the Lule and South Sámi languages.

Therefore we have considered that the language in particular is important for Sápmi Awards. It is important that the languages are visible and in use. I think that not only I, but in fact everyone, has a responsibility to promote this. During the Sápmi Awards, we have had the ambition to make the Sámi language visible and to use it as much as possible. We have deliberately chosen to work with more than one variety. We have, for example:

- sent information to all contestants in several languages, including Swedish, Lule Sámi, North Sámi and English. This meant, for example, that 25 different versions of letters to the nominees, both those who progressed through the competition and those who did not, were sent;
- printed signs and information in Swedish and Sámi varieties (Figure 6);
- used multilingual hosts that speak and understand Swedish, Norwegian, Lule, North and South Sámi;
- allowed and encouraged competitors to submit their materials in their preferred language and variety;
- published news and Facebook posts in Swedish, English and Sámi;
- named all the competition categories in Swedish, English and Lule, North and South Sámi;
- produced several versions of the Sápmi Awards logo in Lule, North and South Sámi;
- encouraged the organisers to use the language in each competition area (Figure 7).



Figure 6. Multilingual signage at the Sápmi Awards.

Source. Photographed by author, Jokkmokk, 2014.



Sápmi Awards lea bálkkašupmi ja doallu mii ávvuda sámi várrogas eallinoainnu. Sierra surggiin gudnejahttot njunnožat geat olgguldadasas jurddašit odđa vuogi mielde váikko doalahit árbevieru ja ollislaš gova. Sápmi Ášards lea doallu hutkkálaš ja bistevaš ovdáneamis gos don ja olles máilbmi lehpet mielde. Doallu lea geassemánu 12-14 b. 2014 Jáhkkámáhkkes.

Jáhkkámáhkke 2014-04-14

Ollu lihkku!

Don leat evttohuvvon dán jagi Sápmi Awardsii. Lea stuorra bálkkašupmi dutnje "Árbevirolaš duojis".

Sápmi Awards galgá nammadit oassálasti guhpte lea gait čeahpimus olles Sámi. Hávskes geassedoalus čalmmustahtta mearkašumi ja erenoamáš árvvu maid visot doaimmalaččat sámi biepmuin, dujiin, dáidagiin ja maid boazodoalus addet.

Sápmi Awards lea jahkásaš doallu ja čadahuvvo dál goalmmát gearddi. Doallu boahat ovtastit allaheakkálaš ávvudeami diehtjouhkimiin ja movttiidahttimiin. Go bálkkaša čeahpes sámi ovdasteddjiid de mii ráhkadit sihke buriid ovdagovaid ja bivnuhis ambasadevrraid sámi kultuvrii ja daid sámi ealáhusaide.

Juryjoavku boahat válljet **guhitta semifinalistaid** daid evttohuvvon mat leat ovdanbukton webbasajis www.sapmiawards.se. Das šaddá manjil jienasteapmi finálie. **Golbma finalistat** válljejuvvojit vuodđuduvvon álbmoga jienaid vuodul ja juryjoavkku jienaid vuodul. Loahpalaš finála lea gehččiid ovdas Jáhkkámáhkkes geassemánu 13-14 bealvvi 2014. Dat golbma loahpalaš finalistat iešgudet suorggis bovdehuvvojit Jáhkkámáhkkaie loahpalaš finálagilvuude ja árvoštallamiidda.

Vuoitosupmi vuoitá lea 100.000 ruota ruvnu. Goappes nuppit ožžot 10.000 ruota ruvnu goappát!

Eavttut

Vai galgá vuoitit Sápmi Awards gáibiduvvo hutkkálašvuoha ja odđa jurddašanvuogit mat heivehit ja lea gudni sámi árbevierus ja ollislašvuodas. Dasa lassin vuotierte leat buoremus go gáibiduvvo danin go finála mearriduvvo Sápmi Awardsas. Nammadit vuotierte gávdnojit sihke oppalaš ja erenoamáš gáibádušat.

Evttohasat galget:

- Bargat hutkkálaččat ja odđa vuogi mielde ovttas ja gutniin sámi árbevieruide ja ollisvuhtii

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Figure 7. Letter of congratulations in North Sámi. It could also be sent in Lule Sámi.

Source. Used with the written permission of the Jokkmokk Municipality.

In addition to, we tried to make the language a natural part of the arrangements. Even when it came to the entertainment, we deliberately chose artists from different language areas. It was important to us that the Sámi language was heard and used in the awards. This is urgent for Sámi speakers, and also for those who have not yet learned their language. With the language being spoken in a natural way, we believe that it is easier for visitors to use the language.

Unfortunately, we have not reached all the ambitious goals that I had wished for. When working with language revitalisation, there is need for a clearly spoken plan, and adequate time, staff, and financial resources are necessary. We had a limited opportunity for this within the project. Even so, I believe we can be happy with the result. We have made the Sámi language visible, incorporated it naturally in the arrangements, and made it possible for the participants to choose their own language. For me, as a project manager, this is crucial.

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