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## **HSBC Malta Foundation hosts ceremony to honour winners of Maltese honeybee awareness competition**

The HSBC Malta Foundation, in collaboration with the Foundation for the Conservation of the Maltese Honeybee (KNM), celebrated the winners of the National Insect €2 Commemorative Coin Competition during a special ceremony held at the HSBC Malta Foundation's premises in Valletta.

The competition, aimed at raising awareness of the endemic Maltese Honeybee (*Apis mellifera ruttneri*), invited participants to create short videos showcasing the bee's unique dark-coloured abdomen and its critical role in the ecosystem. The winning videos, determined by public votes on KNM's YouTube channel, effectively highlighted the importance of this vital pollinator to Malta's biodiversity.

Each of the seven winners — Jeremy Bonello, Brendan Buttigieg, Sebastian Said, Jake Desira, Jorge Spiteri, Joseph Zammit, and Monika Gerdvilyte — was awarded a limited-edition €2 commemorative coin issued by the Central Bank of Malta. These coins were generously sponsored by the HSBC Malta Foundation to honour the Maltese Honeybee, officially recognised as Malta's National Insect.

Speaking at the event, Glenn Bugeja, representing the HSBC Malta Foundation, said: "We are proud to support KNM by sponsoring the purchase of these limited-edition commemorative coins honouring the National Insect of Malta. Conservation efforts can take many forms, from hands-on fieldwork to initiatives like this, which celebrate such a vital pollinator deeply intertwined with our country."

Dylan Farrugia, Co-founder and President of KNM, expressed his gratitude: "I am delighted that a commemorative coin honouring the national insect of Malta is now available. Every effort towards conservation, in any form, contributes to combating the numerous threats facing our honeybee. We are grateful to the HSBC Malta Foundation for recognising and supporting these vital conservation efforts."

The Maltese Honeybee, an endemic species that has evolved in isolation for centuries, faces significant threats to its genetic purity due to the introduction of foreign bee stock. The competition and the release of the commemorative coin aim to raise awareness about these challenges and inspire efforts to protect the species from extinction.

The HSBC Malta Foundation's sponsorship of the competition highlights its ongoing commitment to environmental conservation and sustainability. Through such initiatives, HSBC continues to play a vital role in fostering awareness of Malta's unique biodiversity and the importance of preserving it for future generations.



**Photocaption: The ceremony was held at the HSBC Malta premises to award the winners. From left to right: Glenn Bugeja (representing the HSBC Malta Foundation), Dylan Farrugia (President of the KNM Foundation), Sebastian Said, Monika Gerdvilyte, Jorge Spiteri, Jake Desira. Front: Jeremy Bonello.**

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