



## **Australian Embassy**

### **Nepal**

17 August 2018

#### **Young Australian of the Year 2015 calls for embracing diversity**

Drisana Levitzke-Gray, Young Australian of the Year 2015 shared her experiences of her journey on advocating for the human rights of the Deaf community in Australia and abroad at an event entitled Celebrating Partnerships and Diversity, organised by Australia Awards on 16 August 2018.

Drisana is Ambassador for Deaf Australia, Our Watch, and Full Stop Foundation and promotes the 'Deaf Gain' concept, inspiring the Deaf community in Australia, and encouraging the wider community to embrace diversity.

Speaking at the event in her native language Auslan (Australian sign language) Drisana said, "As a Deaf person, I am a very proud person. I would not be the person I am today if it was not for the fact that I am Deaf. My achievement and successes are with thanks to the endless Deaf role-models that I have had growing up ... by being open-minded and embracing the beautiful diversity that we have on earth and celebrating what each and every one of us has to offer. Together we can use our passion and influence to bring about social change."

The event also marked the completion of another Australia Awards Short Course on Inclusive Education, which aimed to support the Government of Nepal's vision to mainstream inclusive education practices that promote equitable access to education services.

Altogether 21 participants including government officials, persons with disability and members of the disabled persons' organisations shared their plans for the future after having completed the course from 16-27 April 2018 at The Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, Australia.

Addressing the event, Australian Ambassador to Nepal, HE Peter Budd mentioned that promoting human development through improved access to, and quality of, basic education is a priority for Australia's aid program to Nepal. He encouraged an exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences in the areas of inclusive education between Australia and Nepal.

Australia Awards are prestigious international Scholarships and Short Courses funded by the Australian Government. Australia Awards offer the next generation of global leaders an opportunity to undertake study, research and professional development opportunities in Australia. To learn more about Australia Awards, visit [www.australiaawardsnepal.org](http://www.australiaawardsnepal.org)