

The 2nd MLC-SLM Challenge 2026 Opens Registration with a USD 20,000 Prize Pool

CALIFORNIA, CA, UNITED STATES, April 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Interspeech 2026 2nd MLC-SLM Challenge, also known as the MLC-SLM Challenge, is now open for registration. This year's challenge features a USD 20,000 prize pool and invites academic teams, industry teams, and individual researchers to advance Speech Large Language Models for real-world multilingual conversational speech.



The 2nd MLC-SLM Challenge focuses on key capabilities required for next-generation Speech LLMs, including multilingual conversational speech, multi-speaker conversational speech, and real-world dialogue scenarios. Participants will work with multilingual, multi-speaker conversational speech data designed to reflect real-world dialogue scenarios.

- Free access to a large-scale multilingual conversational speech dataset for registered participants, featuring around 1,000 hours of multilingual conversational speech
- A total prize pool of USD 20,000
- Support for both academic and industry teams, as well as individual researchers

Following the success of the first MLC-SLM Challenge, which attracted 78 teams from 13 countries and regions, the 2026 edition introduces a larger and more diverse dataset. The first challenge also received 489 valid leaderboard submissions and 14 technical reports, and 100% of the teams received a certificate of participation.

Participants can join two tracks:
Open Track: Open to all registered participants, including academic and industry teams, as well as individual researchers.

Participants are required to build systems that can identify who is speaking when and transcribe multilingual conversational speech. During evaluation, no oracle segmentation or speaker labels will be provided, making the task closer to real-world speech processing scenarios.

Participants are required to build systems that understand multilingual conversations using both acoustic and semantic information. Evaluation will be based on multiple-choice questions about the full conversation, testing the model's ability to capture meaning, context, and speaker-level information.

Both pipeline-based systems and end-to-end Speech LLM systems are welcome. External datasets and pretrained models are allowed, as long as they are freely accessible and clearly reported.

The challenge dataset contains around 1,000 hours of audio in 12 languages, including English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Thai, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Urdu, and Turkish.

The dataset also includes diverse regional accents, such as Canadian French, Mexican Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, British English, American English, Australian English, Indian English, and Philippine English.

This makes the MLC-SLM Challenge a valuable benchmark for researchers working on multilingual ASR, speaker diarization, Speech LLMs, and spoken language understanding.

Registration is now open. Participation is free, and the dataset will be provided free of charge to registered participants.

Registration form: <https://forms.gle/jfAZ95abGy4ZiNHo7>

Challenge page: <https://www.nexdata.ai/competition/mlc-slm>

Contact: mlc-slmw@nexdata.ai

Join the 2nd MLC-SLM Challenge 2026 and help advance the next generation of multilingual Speech Large Language Models.

MLC-SLM Organizing Committee

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