



Can a bold, pioneering social experiment break down barriers and build bridges between families from different cultures?

SBS's three-part documentary series
The Swap premieres on **Wednesday 8 March**
at **8.30pm** on SBS and SBS On Demand

Interviews Available

Link to trailer [here](#) and images [here](#)

Wednesday 15 February 2023

In a trailblazing, television-first original series, *The Swap* follows what happens when 12 students and families from very different cultures, religions, and backgrounds are thrown into each other's worlds.

Exploring whether a ground-breaking social experiment encompassing a school swap can make a real difference in breaking down social barriers and building greater acceptance, respect and understanding between diverse cultural communities, *The Swap* also observes the possibility of the experiment backfiring as cultures collide, with the potential for controversies to flare.

The architect behind *The Swap* is **Ali Kadri**, CEO of the Islamic College of Brisbane. Taking part are six Muslim families, four Catholic families and two atheist families. Over one school term, Kadri accompanies the students on an emotional rollercoaster as they experience the anxiety, excitement and wonder of spending time at each other's schools and with each other's families and communities.

For everyone involved, *The Swap* marks the first time they've experienced being close to someone who sees the world in a completely different way. It's a huge leap into the unknown, with shocking, hilarious, poignant, and moving results — culminating in an eye-opening and compelling exploration of how little we know about each other, and how very different — as well as similar — we really are.

Ali Kadri says, "This experiment is about acknowledging that we are all different, being proud of the fact that we are different, and respecting each other's differences. That cannot be done unless we make the decision to move out of our comfort zones and engage with those who are different around us. If the experiment fails, I may find myself out of a job! But this is an experience that has the potential to transform lives, and for that reason I am happy to take this risk. If successful, I'm hoping it could inform our national curriculum and be considered by schools across the country."



Australian Government





Bernadine Lim, Senior Commissioning Editor, Documentaries, SBS, says, "We're excited about the potential for *The Swap* to spark understanding and create positive transformation for all the families involved, and for all Australians who follow their journey. We've been given incredible access to this bold community initiative, and we hope the stories and experiences of those involved will encourage discussion, enlighten and inspire audiences. It's a unique story of contemporary Australia and we're delighted it is part of SBS's original documentary offering in 2023."

Grainne Brunson, Head of Content at Screen Australia, says, "We are proud to fund this innovative documentary from the experienced producers at Southern Pictures which will bring an in-depth exploration of multicultural Australia to our screens. I'm confident the series will help start conversations and provide a pathway for further empathy and understanding of all cultures and communities."

Dr Belinda Burns, Chief Creative Officer at Screen Queensland, says, "At Screen Queensland, we see the immense value of productions like *The Swap* in authentically reflecting the diversity of our state and promoting genuine cultural cohesion on a national level. The series follows on from SBS and Southern Pictures' popular 2017 factual program *The Mosque Next Door*, which also showcased the people and stories of Brisbane's Islamic community. Screen Queensland is proud to support this bold, locally-filmed production and we congratulate SBS, Southern Pictures and all involved."

ABOUT ALI KADRI

Ali Kadri was born and raised in India. Following the deaths of his first cousin and many friends during a period of sectarian violence and anti-Muslim riots, Ali's father encouraged him to move to Australia to study. After arriving in Sydney in 2003, Ali completed a Master of Business Administration at Charles Sturt University, a Master of Professional Accounting at James Cook University, and a Graduate Certificate in International Relations at Griffith University. After a successful business career in education and technology sectors, Ali became the CEO of the Islamic College of Brisbane in 2020. He believes that educating the next generation is the best way to ensure the progress and growth of our shared community.

All three episodes of *The Swap* will be available to stream on SBS On Demand with subtitles in Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean. All three episodes will also be available with audio description.

***The Swap* premieres on Wednesday 8 March at 8.30pm SBS and SBS On Demand. The three-part series continues weekly, with episode two premiering on 15 March and episode three premiering on 22 March.**

Production credit: *The Swap* is a Southern Pictures production for SBS. Major production investment from Screen Australia in association with SBS. Financed with support from Screen Queensland.

For screeners and images, please visit the [SBS Screening Room](#)

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